



TOWN OF TEWKSBURY

TOWN HALL
1009 MAIN ST
TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 01876

FINANCE COMMITTEE

David Aznavoorian, Chairman
Damin Sutherby, Vice Chair
Rob Kocsmiersky, Clerk
Raymond Lisiecki
Thomas L. Cooke
Laurence Sanford
Paul McDermott

Meeting Minutes March 5, 2015

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by David Aznavoorian at 7:05 p.m. at the Pike House. Present at the meeting were Tom Cooke, Ray Lisiecki, Larry Sanford, Paul McDermott, Damin Sutherby, and Rob Kocsmiersky. Also present was Richard Montuori, Town Manager, Karen Kucala, Finance Director, and Melissa Johnson, Recording Secretary.

2) FY16 Budget Department Review (subject to change)

School Department

Present were Dr. John O'Connor, School Superintendant, Sherry Matthews, School Business Manager, and School Committee members Dennis Francis, Krissy Polimeno, Lisa Puccia, and Jamie Cutelis.

Mr. Aznavoorian thanked the School Committee members, Dr. O'Connor and Ms. Matthews for attending tonight's meeting and for the information they have provided to date and introduced the members of the Finance Committee.

Dr. O'Connor noted that the spreadsheets are being done differently this year from years past and explained that they have been aligned with the State requirements. Ms. Matthews provided the members with a copy of the budget presentation and reviewed the key factors:

- Net Operating Budget submitted is \$39,506,385 representing an increase of approximately \$524,185 or 1.4%.
- The budget is in line with the Town Manager's recommendations.
- A majority of all operating accounts have been level funded from FY15.
- Step & Lane increases are approximately \$326,000.
- The budget presented does not include any salary increases as it is a negotiating year.
- The budget is in compliance with contractual obligations.
- Funds have been moved to be more in line with building needs.

- Special Education transportation costs have been increased in connection with Out of District placements.
- Updated technology in all seven (7) schools.
- Increase in Out of District tuitions.
- Fixed costs are more in line with actuals.

The total FY16 School Department budget is \$39,506,385 representing an increase of approximately \$544,000 or 1.40%.

Ms. Matthews explained that the budget has been split between Special and Regular education per the State and has been broken down into series:

Regular Day Programs

The total Regular Education Programs FY16 budget is \$26,653,156 representing an approximate decrease of \$28,000 or -11%.

1000 – Administration

The total FY16 Regular Education Administration is approximately \$1,837,650 representing an increase of approximately \$4,000. Ms. Matthews noted that there is an increase in administration of 22% due to contractual obligations.

Dr. O'Connor noted that a review of the technology at the high school was done and it was determined to be top of the line and working well. There were some security recommendations made and these have been implemented. There were also hardware recommendations, however, these items were not addressed. Mr. Aznavoorian suggested a replacement plan be established. Dr. O'Connor noted that this could possibly begin to be put in place next year. The older equipment would be recycled to the other schools. Dr. O'Connor noted that wireless has been added to all of the schools including the elementary schools. Mr. Aznavoorian noted that the Computer Study Committee is working on implementing antivirus for the town and suggested Keith Young rejoin the Committee to work on this. Ms. Matthews will discuss this with Mr. Young.

Mr. Aznavoorian asked if any new software has been added and Dr. O'Connor noted that all e-mail has been switched over to Google and it is beginning to be introduced in the classrooms. Discussion took place on training and Dr. O'Connor explained that training has been difficult as all of the teachers cannot be taken out of the classrooms at once and many do not want to do the training after hours and they would likely expect a stipend.

2000 – Instruction

Ms. Matthews explained that overall the instruction budget has been level funded at \$18,585,349. A decrease is shown in secretary salaries; however, this is a reallocation as SPED secretary salaries have been moved out. Funds have been transferred from Other Instructional Supplies (2440) to General Supplies (2430) for the purpose of upgrading Edgenuity learning management system. Virtual High School will be eliminated. There

is an increase of approximately \$10,000 in Testing and Assessments (2720) for testing materials.

Mr. Kocsmiersky noted that there is a significant increase in testing and assessments and Ms. Matthews explained that there were one time funds of \$15,000 available last year. These funds are no longer available; however, line items have been adjusted to address this.

3000 – Other Student Services

The total regular education other student services budget is approximately \$2,565,938 representing an overall increase of approximately \$2,000. Ms. Matthews noted that there is an increase in the Resource Officer line item of approximately \$20,000. Ms. Matthews explained that this is a three year program in which the town's share increases each year. An additional 25% increase will also occur next year per the grant. This amount has been based on \$45/day, 180 days per year.

Mr. Aznavoorian noted that nurse substitutes reflects a decrease and then an increase and asked why. Ms. Matthews explained that it only increase \$1500 and noted that Column A shows what was spent in FY14 and Column B shows what was budgeted in FY15.

4000 – Operation and Maintenance of Buildings

The total FY16 regular education Operation & Maintenance of Buildings budget is approximately \$3,584,366 representing an increase of approximately \$48,630 due to increases in custodial salaries and building maintenance.

Mr. Aznavoorian asked if the maintenance costs for the high school are known now that the high school has been operating for a while and Ms. Matthew confirmed this.

Mr. Cooke discussed the energy conservation projects that have been done at some of the schools and noted that a savings is not reflected and there is in fact increases and asked what went wrong. Ms. Matthews explained that she feels these items have been under budgeted in previous years and can provide a study that was done that reflects this. Dr. O'Connor invited Mr. Cooke to review the documentation on this.

5000 – Fixed Charges

The total FY16 regular education fixed charges budget is approximately \$75,800 representing a decrease of approximately \$82,695. Ms. Matthews explained that this decrease is due to less retirees in FY16 than FY15.

Mr. Kocsmiersky asked if the school department feels they will be fully staffed by not replacing the retiring elementary school teacher and Dr. O'Connor confirmed this and explained that they feel they could always do more and would like to implement a program for the gifted as well as full day kindergarten.

7000 Equipment Replacement

The FY16 regular education equipment replacement budget has been level funded at \$4,053.00.

Special Education Programs

The total FY16 Special Education budget is \$12,853,229 representing an increase of approximately \$573,000 or 4.66%.

Ms. Matthews noted that many of the increases in Special Education are due to reallocations from regular education to special education.

2000 – Instruction

The FY16 special education instruction budget is approximately \$7,809,981 representing an increase of approximately \$130,000 due to reallocations from regular education to special education.

3000 – Other Student Services

The total FY16 special education other student services budget is \$1,532,734 representing an increase of approximately \$304,426 due to an increase in out of district students.

9000 – Tuition Programs

The total FY16 special education tuition programs budget is approximately \$3,510,514 representing an increase of approximately \$138,000.

Ms. Matthews reviewed the special education tuitions problem which reflects an anticipated deficit of -\$1,880,554 and the solution to this problem which is to utilize funds from the FY16 tuition appropriation budget, FY5 remaining circuit breaker funds, FY16 anticipate circuit breaker revenue, and FY16 stabilization funds to close the deficit.

Mr. Sanford asked how many Special Ed students there are and Mr. Pelletier noted approximately 635-640. Dr. O'Connor noted that approximately 83 students are out of district.

Mr. Sutherby thanked the school department for the new budget format as he feels it is the most transparent it has been in years. Mr. Sutherby noted that Tewksbury was not chosen by the MSBA for a new elementary school as it was not deemed critical. Dr. O'Connor noted that one of the communities that was chosen had a school that was constructed in the 1800's and the other community in the 1920's. A third proposal will be submitted. There are two different options: 1) one new school to house all four elementary schools or 2) two new schools to replace the four elementary schools doing one school at a time with the Trahan being a priority. The issues that arise are the land to accommodate one large school along with the parking and play areas, etc.

Mr. Aznavoorian asked if the timeframe is known if Tewksbury is chosen under the third proposal and Dr. O'Connor noted 3-5 years. Ms. Matthews explained that the town would know in December if it is chosen.

Discussion took place on the increase in the English Language Learners (ELL) program. Dr. O'Connor noted that they do not currently have sufficient staff to fully educate all of the ELL students and would need 2-3 additional staff members. Currently there are 1.5 teachers. Dr. O'Connor will be making a recommendation to the School Committee that the position be made full time and a new position be added next year. This may still not be in compliance with the State Regulations; however, Tewksbury is not the only community in this dilemma. There are currently approximately 33 students enrolled in the program. Mr. Sanford asked if the ELL students are considered Special Education and Dr. O'Connor explained that they are not unless they have a learning disability.

Mr. Lisiecki requested the revenue from the high school facilities and Ms. Matthews noted that she will provide this information.

Mr. Cooke discussed the copier center at the high school and the intent to reduce costs when they have actually increased. Ms. Matthews explained that

The Committee took a five minute recess. Dr. O'Connor, Ms. Matthews, Mr. Dick, Mr. Francis, Ms. Polimeno, Ms. Puccia left and did not return.

The meeting was called back to order at 8:52 p.m.

3) Town Manager and Finance Director Reports (as applicable)

None.

3) Finance Committee Matters of Interest (as applicable)

Mr. Lisiecki requested any additional questions for the School Department be provided to him by Monday so that he can send them out all at one time.

4) Committee Member Reports (as applicable)

None.

5) Approval of Meeting Minutes

There was no meeting minutes presented for approval.

6) Approval of Recording Secretary and Timesheet

MOTION: Mr. Sutherby made the motion to approve the recording secretary timesheet in the amount of \$201.49; seconded by Mr. Lisiecki and the motion carried 7-0.

7) Future Proposed Meeting Dates (subject to change)

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 12, 2015 at the Pike House.

Adjourn.

MOTION: Mr. Sutherby made the motion to adjourn at 8:58 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Lisiecki and the motion carried 7-0.

Approved: June 18, 2015

Documents Presented and/or Discussed March 5, 2015

- 1) **FY2016 School Department Budget**
A copy can be found with the School Department Business Manager
- 2) **Recording Secretary Time Sheet**
A copy can be found with the Finance Director